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The Cuban Crisis ... As Overheard in Washington

"I think we must intervene to help the Cuban people get freedom, even if it means a civil war in which every man, woman and child ..."

"He appealed to you for aid before he turned to Russia, and you refused?"

"Yes, that certainly would be his fault. ..."

"You mean you think we should help the Cuban people get better housing, health, education, and more land for ... Say, you're not going soft on that Communist ..."

"A Libertarian, you say? Oh, yes, a Socialist Democrat. ... And an agrarian reformer. ... Was chief-of-staff under Batista."

"Good. Sounds like just the man we ..."

II

"Good idea. Heads, the Cuban people support him; tails, they don't. ..."

III

"Of course the President was briefed! Just last week we sent a note saying ..."

"We certainly did not withhold information from him. Well, yes, we knew about the tanks ... and the planes he had in other parts of the country ... and that most of the Cubans were still supporting him. ... But, aside from that, we sent him every scrap of ..."

"We didn't intend to say the whole Cuban Air Force had been destroyed in the Havana raid. We only meant to say we wished. ..."

IV

"Oh, no; he didn't think for a moment the President would ... No; not after his public ... We'd never ..."

nation into a ... We only thought that if the action could be started, and if the landing should happen to be going badly, and with our forces right there on hand, and if the President should realize that to save the situation he need only ..."

V

"I know what you're going to say, Adlai. But with just a little better luck ..."

"No, sir. The Prime Minister only said he thought it a bit of a reflection on your Agency's intelligence, sir ..."

"He says they're introducing a new bill. Want to drop the middle word. Just call it the Central Agency. ..."

VI

"No, of course I'm not advocating censorship, or covering up our mistakes. But don't you think the survival of freedom justifies a certain curtailment of ... of, uh ..."

"No, I don't think it's inconsistent. ... Yes, our paper did, say last month that 90% of the Cuban people support most of his reforms, but since then ..."

VII

"Yes, ma'm, it's a rocking chair. ... He said it would be good for Mr. Dulles to ..."

"Hello, Pearson? CIA. We've been trying to ... Yes, our boys are finding it difficult. ... I mean, you hear so many different ... Well, it's terribly hard to get in down there. ... Yes, so we were wondering whether you might ..."

"U.S. News and World Report. ... our mailing list? We'd be glad to. Yes, Mr. Dulles; now, what address shall we use ..."

"It's CIA, Mr. Pearson. They're wondering if there's any news on ..."

VIII

"I realize that the sugar deal and the embargo left Castro with no alternative. But I still think that if he had cared at all about democracy he would not have ..."

"No, I didn't say it would solve everything, to ban 'Adeste, Fidelis,' but you will agree ..."

"I certainly do think the landing was justified. How else could the Cuban people have found out how they felt about Castro ..."

"I still don't see all the fuss. ... So Russian-American relations have been jolted, China's position strengthened, Latin-American feelings inflamed, the Cuban dictatorship strengthened, 1,500 lives lost, and the danger of nuclear war increased. We did keep him from invading Florida, didn't we? ..."

"It's like I said before: We've got to help the Cuban people get real freedom—even if it means a civil war in which every man, woman and child ..."

—David Andrews

(David Andrews is director of the Methodist Student Center at Appalachian State Teachers College, Boone, N.C.)

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